

lated regions, nor, indeed, for such wars as the Italian wars of liberation or the many wars of the Balkan peoples against their Turkish oppressors. The Black Death in the 14th century probably reduced the population of Western Europe by at least one-third, and yet wars were as prevalent and bitter in the 15th as in the 13th century.

Again, the great periods of modern European civilisation, the 13th, 16th and 19th centuries, were period of expanding populations, but in comparison with the preceding centuries the position of women was in no way unfavourable. There can be great misery and degradation in thinly-populated as in over-populated areas, and women occupy a low or even lower position therein. The concluding remark that, to-day, the new knowledge of the methods of birth control makes it unnecessary to regard marriage and the right to an independent personality as mutually exclusive is a good instance of the temper and the want of comprehension of normal human relationships with which this class of literature is apt to be written.

C. D. W.

**Howe, EDITH.** *The Cradle Ship*. Cassell and Co., Ltd.; 1917; pp. 219; price 3s. 6d.

MISS EDITH HOWE'S charming volume is intended for the very young, but it is written in so poetic a vein that it will undoubtedly appeal to readers of all ages.

The delightful family of five, who, snugly ensconced in their fairy craft, travel from one wonder to another, must surely be closely related to Peter Pan.

Together they sail to Babyland, and with fairies to guide them, learn in the most exquisite way from mother-flowers, mother-fish, mother-insects, mother-animals, and finally human mothers, how the offspring are brought into the world.

The captious critic may object that the eugenic teaching of the book lacks any reference to religion, and there is perhaps much to be said for this point of view. On the other hand, there are palpable advantages from a treatment of the subject from a purely poetic and scientific standpoint. It is not perhaps generally realised that vague explanations leave wondering childhood to ponder over these matters in silence. A sense of knowledge (even though that knowledge be far more imperfect than the children realise) soothes and satisfies the minds of the little searchers after truth. The volume can be safely recommended to all parents, whatever views they may hold.

The value of the text will be much enhanced in children's eyes by the four dainty fairy pictures in colour by Florence May Anderson.

F. S. WARBURG.

**Falmouth, KATHLEEN.** *Talks about Ourselves*. Geo. Routledge (London) and E. P. Dutton (New York); pp. 350; price 1s. 6d. net.

UNDER this attractive title Lady Falmouth has given us a little manual of physiology and hygiene, written in a simple, interesting way, suitable for presentation to boys and girls; the style of it is likely to prove of exceptional interest to young folks, for while giving essentials it is not diffuse, and is very practical in its application, *e.g.*, in the chapter on the heart and its work, she deals with the effect which smoking may have on the heart and nerves of growing boys and girls in a very sensible way. One regrets, however, that in dealing with ventilation she does not take advantage of modern knowledge on the subject to show that air, though it may be vitiated by excess of carbon dioxide, is robbed of its prejudicial effects if it is kept in rapid circulation.

Of special interest from our point of eugenic education, is the fact that in this, the second edition, a very useful chapter on the "Passing On of Life" has been introduced. It shows—as does the whole book—that the same laws govern all organic life, that all these laws find their

highest, most elaborate, expression in Man, and though it does not give all the information an intelligent child is likely to desire and should have, it is an excellent paving towards further enquiry. The author points out in her introduction that it is to parents and teachers she looks for further elucidation of these "talks." She has, moreover, the eugenic vision before her.

It is with great pleasure one recommends this little book to parents and teachers, and also—though the author does not mention the group in her introduction—to social workers, club leaders and others who have the opportunity of guiding young people. It is one of the very few simple books on these subjects which reveal a broad outlook and a comprehensive survey.

NORAH MARCH, B.Sc.

**Degen, J.** *Golden Rules of Adolescent Purity.* 6d.

THIS little book is purposed to be written for parents, guardians and teachers, but it contains only a generalisation that purity of thought is necessary to purity of body, and that religion is a help towards both. Many quotations from the Scriptures are given, but no fresh thought or new presentation of the subject is offered to the reader. No physiology, psychology, or eugenics is dealt with at all. The venereal diseases are mentioned, and Dr. Havelock Ellis is quoted to show that its ravages are serious, but the subject is only slightly dealt with. The book intends well, but is not likely to give any information to anyone having reached the status of those to whom it is addressed, and is quite unsuitable for the young.

G. M. C.

## PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

### ENGLISH.

#### **The Population Problem.**

**THE BIRTH-RATE**, by Dean Inge. This is a most suggestive and illuminating article written round the Report of the National Birth-rate Commission, with sidelights thrown from the researches of Sutherland, Hirsch and Havelock Ellis. But it is in the forecast of the form likely to be taken by the future population problem, deduced from a study of its past evolutionary results that the main interest of the article lies.

A brief note on the correlation between fertility and parental care is followed by a comprehensive survey of the varied causes contributing to the rise and fall of populations in the early European civilisations, through the deadlock, so to speak, of the Middle Ages on to the unprecedented increase which marked the 18th century. International statistics are quoted as proving that the parallelism between birth- and death-rates results in a net increase in population in countries with a high birth-rate very little larger than that in countries with a low birth-rate, *e.g.*, the population of Australia and New Zealand, with a low birth-rate and the lowest death-rate in the world, increases more rapidly than in Russia with an enormous birth-rate and a proportionately high death-rate.

In England during the last 40 years the birth-rate has declined by about one-third, thus approximating very closely to the fall in the death-rate, but the root of the future problem lies in the fact that these declines are not evenly distributed among the various classes of the community. "The fears of the eugenist," declares the Dean, "about the quality of the population are far more reasonable than the invectives of the fanatic about its defective quantity," and these fears are by no means confined to eugenists, but echo back from Germany, America, South Africa, and elsewhere.